

## HILPRECHT'S IMAGININGS

## IMMINENT ASSYRIOLOGIST STATES THE CASE AGAINST HIM.

Look Credit for the Work Others Did at Nippur—One Tablet He "Found" He Bought From a Dealer Here—Renewal of the Agitation Harmful to University.

"I am very sorry the old charge of 'literary dishonesty' against Dr. Hilprecht of the University of Pennsylvania has been revived by the resolution passed at a meeting of the American Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis in Philadelphia yesterday. It is a painful subject. The matter has been disposed of so far as the university is concerned by the action of the university trustees in exonerating Prof. Hilprecht, so far as American Assyriologists are concerned they are convinced that Prof. Hilprecht imagines things which probably never happened—positively never happened."

This comment was made by a gentleman holding an important professional position who is recognized as a high authority in Assyriology. Because of his sincere regret that the Hilprecht controversy has been reopened, which includes a feeling of concern against those who have reopened it, he declined to permit his name to be used in connection with further discussion of the matter. He was asked to make further comment for the sake of making clear the present status of the controversy.

"The exonerating report of the university trustees," he continued, "was made nearly two and a half years ago, so of course the original charges against Prof. Hilprecht were made some time longer ago than that. Yet since they were first made Prof. Hilprecht has offered no evidence to refute them and has made but one formal allusion to them which I am aware of. That was in his introduction to one of his volumes issued a couple of years ago in the series 'The Excavations at Nippur' of the University of Pennsylvania. In that he briefly mentioned the charge, and professed to speak further on the subject."

"This he has not done so far as I am aware. He has had ample opportunity to do so. At a meeting of the American Oriental Society, held here last May, resolutions were adopted similar to those adopted in Philadelphia yesterday. Prof. Hilprecht is a member of the American Oriental Society. I believe; anyway he was informed that some action in his case was to be taken at the May meeting, but he left the country a day or two before the meeting was held."

"I hoped then that the subject would be dropped, but the trouble is that some of the younger men who did important work in the excavations were wholly ignored by Prof. Hilprecht in his reports and other writings. They feel slighted, and that perhaps is natural, but this continual agitation on their part begins to have the appearance of malice."

"All American Orientalists know that those young men did valuable work. We all know that Hilprecht did little or nothing of the work. That should be a fact and induce them to be the painful subject rest."

"You speak of Prof. Hilprecht, having done little of the work; the public would be interested in anything further you will say on that subject," the reporter suggested.

"Why, the expedition pursued its search and made excavations for eight or ten years at Nippur. The fact is, Dr. Peters was the first field director, Prof. Hilprecht having general control. In the first season Prof. Hilprecht left Nippur after a short visit, declaring that he did not believe the excavations there would reveal anything. But, as the world knows, the important things were found, and then Dr. Peters resigned from his position on the expedition and returned to his duties at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Peters, and Dr. Hilprecht, both practically concluded the work of the expedition before Prof. Hilprecht returned to Nippur. We know that Prof. Hilprecht did not personally do any of the work, and that he had no objects, that indeed, they were all looked and ready for shipment before he arrived, and he saw only a few which were unpacked for his inspection."

"However, what was found there was in a sense found by Prof. Hilprecht, as he was the titular head of the expedition, but it is not understood that the controversy arose around some tablets which never were in Nippur, surely never in the Temple library, as called, but one of which is described by Prof. Hilprecht in his writings and pictures as having been found by him in the Temple library of Nippur. The tablet in question was bought by Prof. Hilprecht from Daniel Z. Nourian, a merchant of this city. That story you must get from Mr. Nourian."

"Prof. Hilprecht is a charming man personally and an able scholar, too, but as he has sold he is possessed of an imagination which plays him tricks. That is one way of explaining his trouble. It might be called 'the big head.' The complaint sometimes afflicts learned men with a great ambition."

"As for that exonerating of Hilprecht by the trustees, they are business men; they naturally wished to protect the university from a scandal. Dr. Hilprecht is a very wealthy man with many important family connections in Pennsylvania, related intimately in business and social affairs with the trustees. Such conditions act as influences in such matters. Assyriologists and all friends of Dr. Peters wished the investigation of the charges made by competent investigators. The university had at its disposal in its own museum men abundantly capable of making such examination, but their services were not called upon."

"The result of all this agitation—and this I deplore it—is that the splendid work the University of Pennsylvania has equipped to do, prepared with funds from the Clarke endowment to do, is in a state unfavorable to produce results."

"Concerning the subject of the last comment quoted above Dr. Peters has said: 'The saddest part of it all is the condition in which the university museum is left. Chaos is the word that describes it. Nobody knows what is there. Nobody can find out. I wrote only recently to one of the curators asking about a collection I purchased myself. He replied that he did not know anything about it and could not find out, because he could not get permission to see a catalogue. As a matter of fact they will not let anybody see anything there.'

"The reporter next called upon Dr. Z. Nourian, who is a dealer in antiquities at 233 Fifth avenue.

"Yes," said Mr. Nourian, "I bought the tablet Prof. Hilprecht has described as having come from the Temple library of Nippur. I bought it from a dealer in the city of Bagdad and sold it with others to Prof. Hilprecht."

"Asked to tell the story of the purchase, Mr. Nourian continued: 'While the University of Pennsylvania expedition was at work at Nippur I was also looking for antiquities in the city of Bagdad I chanced to meet a dealer who lived near Abu-habba. In the latter place excavations were being carried on. My dealer lent me money to purchase an understanding (this I infer, knowing the ways of such dealers) that he could repay their loan with any bits of antiquities they are able to pick up. In this way my dealer had picked up fifteen or seventeen tablets which had been unearthed at Abu-habba.'

"I had been asked to spend a few pounds for anything I might come upon which looked to me as if it might be of value to the museum of the University of Pennsylvania. I bought those tablets and entered all the details of the transaction in my note book. The tablets were described in Babylonian cuneiform. That has

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Who Gets the Hook at the Criticism, That's the question—Shit! It's the Handmaster, Because of a Tune He Said He Wrote—Surprised? Well, Some Will Not Be.

There was a good deal of what Mr. Dusen of Norway and Nazimova, would call "the joy of life" around the neighborhood of Mr. Rector's front stoop last night. Ten thousand fish horns were tooting out the old, tooting in the new. The amount of tooting of all kinds, in fact, was considerable. Why? Why make all this fuss over an arbitrary, man made division of eternal time?

While the Christian century is tottering along in its first pair of short pants the century in Islam has already reached and passed its gage maturity. The evening baked beans of 1907 will coldly furnish the breakfast table of 1908 (in Boston, anyhow), and they will be eaten, and then we'll have to plan for lunch, just as of old. What difference does it make?

These metaphysical speculations may not seem to the careless mind to have anything whatever to do with "Miss Hook of Holland," a little thing in the musical comedy line imported from dear old London. Well, they haven't—not a solitary thing! We simply make them because it's easier than to write about the play. We like to put sure things off as long as possible.

But that doesn't mean "Miss Hook of Holland" is like "The Girl of the Year" of late memory at the Lyric. Dear me (note, dear us!), no! We wouldn't say so if it were. We shouldn't have the heart. But it isn't. It is just another one of those cambric tea musical comedies that are always running for a year in London and getting brought over here by Charles Frohman or somebody after Earle and Lorde and things have married all the English chorus. That is why a new lot of broilers has to be picked out along the alley each time one of these pieces arrives. About such pieces there is nothing new to be said. That is why we are so loath to say it.

Paul Rubens and Austen Hurgon wrote what they call the "chatter" of "Miss Hook." Paul Rubens wrote what he calls the "jingles and tunes" all by his own self. Mercy, what a mighty man is he! Not content with being a Gilbert, he is a Sullivan too. And he's much more than the other. We don't mind admitting that right out in meeting.

There is a pretty cambric tea tinkle to much of his music, though it gets deadly monotonous after a while. Compared with George Cohan's efforts at composition it is, of course, high art. But why use George Cohan as a standard, with "Tom Jones" and "The Merry Widow" near at hand? Compared with their scores, the music of "Miss Hook" is merely some more notes and a whistle or two. "Miss Hook" writes tunes, says Mr. Hook, "are capable of worse things. He—perhaps. But not often. And like the music, the 'clatter' drudges pleasantly and amiably on, in its pretty Dutch setting, out of the mouths of pretty Christie Moseley, beginning with a 'pretty pink petti from Peter, a lovely blue petti from John,' that enlivened matters some, as she pointed each petti to her own.

And there were songs about cheese—not cheesy songs—and such foolish bits of English humor as Tom Wain's list of things he didn't like, which included "small, sticky children." Everybody concerned did all this as if he or she enjoyed it and thought it quite the nicest of all possible things to do, so there was spirit and liveliness in it, and the audience had a real good time. Having said which, we consider that we have done our duty.

News of Plays and Players.

This week will mark the close of Arnold Daly's occupancy of the Broadway Theatre. His last day will be spent rehearsing of his new play, "My Manne Rose," which has been written for him by Owen Kidder.

Metropolitan Opera and Has have invited Victor Moore and the entire "Talk of New York" company and the executive staff of the Metropolitan Theatre to a New Year's supper at the Café Ambassadeurs to-night.

What was technically called a hearing before the trustees of the University of Pennsylvania amounted to nothing. It had nothing to do with the resolution adopted by the Society of Biblical Literature yesterday. The trustees of the University of Pennsylvania introduced the resolution to-day, said.

When the resolution was introduced I did not know Prof. Hilprecht was not in the room. As to the statement that he made that I am an enemy I can only state that I have become your enemy by telling the truth.

Dr. John P. Peters, speaking for the resolution, said:

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12,000 Wash Waists at \$2.00 each Regular Price \$3.50

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\$2.00, \$2.45, \$2.65, \$2.85, \$2.95, \$3.45, \$3.65, \$3.85, \$3.95, \$4.45, \$4.85, \$5.45, \$5.85, \$6.85

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Every Department Included.

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MR. JAMES P. SILO, AUCTIONEER.

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The well known Connoisseur and dealer,

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The rare and beautiful Tapestries,

Gobelin Suites and Chairs, Bronzes, Marbles,

BY ORDER OF MESSRS. MARSH, WINSLOW & WEAVER.

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Rare and valuable pieces belonging to

Miss Agnes Campbell,

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BY ORDER OF EDWARD J. McGuire, Esq., ATT'Y., 53 WALL STREET.

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The Gallery of

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## AMUSEMENTS.

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Seaside Block, Sixth Ave. and 44th St. Daily, Mat. and Sat. Evs. 8:15. 12:30. NOVELTIES FOR NEW YEARS. Hippodrome's Great and Glorious Spectacular Ballet Divertissement.

FOUR SEASONS. 400 BALLET. WINTER CARNIVAL.

THE DROWNING BALLET. MARCELLE, EARTH'S FUNNIEST AN. 12 ACTS. CIRCUS. 30 CLOWNS. WULF'S PERFORMING HORSES.

LYRIC. 44th St. W. of B'way. Evs. 8:15. Mat. To-day & Sat. 4:15. MRS. FISKE ROSEMERGHOLM.

DALY'S. B'way and 30th St. Evs. 8:15. Last Week. Mat. To-day & Sat. 4:15. "HACKETT HONOUR" By Alfred Squire.

NEXT MONDAY—SEATS TO-MORROW. E. M. IN "THOUSAND CANDLES." A melodrama from the novel of the same name.

CASINO. B'way and 30th St. Last Week. Mat. To-day. To-morrow & Sat. 4:15. DEARIE'S "THE GREAT WHITE WAY."

THOMAS W. HAYES' FUNABASHI. Musical Production. Alice Fisher, Vera Michels, Joseph Miron, Wm. Rock, Maud Fulton, Walter Percival, etc.

HACKETT. 44th St. W. of B'way. Evs. 8:15. JOHN MASON IN "WITCHING HOUR."

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NEW AMSTERDAM THEATRE. 44th St. Evs. 8:15. Mat. To-day & Sat. 4:15. HEAVY SLEEVES.

THE MERRY WIDOW. The Musical Sensation of 2 Continents. Seats & 50th Street. Evs. 8:15. Mat. To-day & Sat. 4:15.

BROADWAY THEATRE. B'way and 41st St. Gala Holiday Matinee To-day.

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WHY OTIS HARLAN

SEATS NOW ON SALE.

LIBERTY THEATRE. West 42d St. Evs. 8:15. Mat. To-day & Sat. 4:15. "MERRY WIDOW."

MAS. TALLAFERRO. In FREDERIC THOMPSON'S Production of

POLLY CIRCUS. By Margaret Mayo.

NEW YORK THEATRE. Mat. Daily. 2:45. Evs. 8:15. 12:30. JEWELL'S MAJESTIC.

VESTA VICTORIA. Mat. Daily. 2:45. Evs. 8:15. 12:30. "THE GREAT WHITE WAY."

WHIT CUNLIFFE.

MANHATTAN OPERA HOUSE. 14th St. and Broadway. Evs. 8:15. Mat. To-day & Sat. 4:15. "THE GREAT WHITE WAY."

THEATRE OF HOPKINS. 14th St. and Broadway. Ev